

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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Marsha S. McLaughlin, Director

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April 17, 2014

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

Petition Accepted on April 1, 2014 Planning Board Meeting of May 1, 2014 Zoning Board Hearing to be scheduled

Case No./Petitioner: ZB 1104M – GF Columbia, LLC

Location: Fifth Election District

North side of Grace Drive approximately 200 feet east of Quiet Night Ridge; Tax Map 35, Grid 21, Parcel 145, Parcel B; currently 7600 Grace Drive

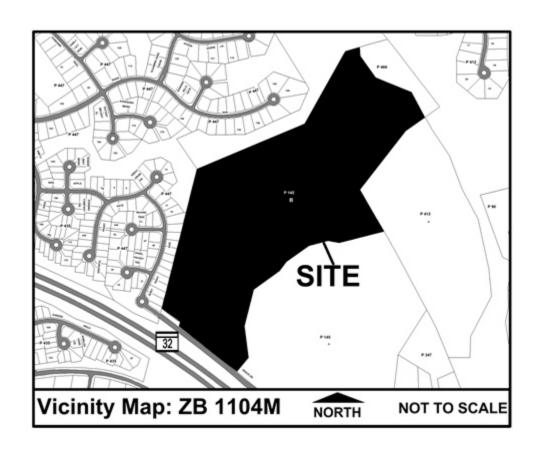
(the "Site")

Area of Site: 66.8 acres

Current Zoning: PEC Proposed Zoning: CEF-R

Department of Planning and Zoning Recommendation:

APPROVAL WITH REVISIONS



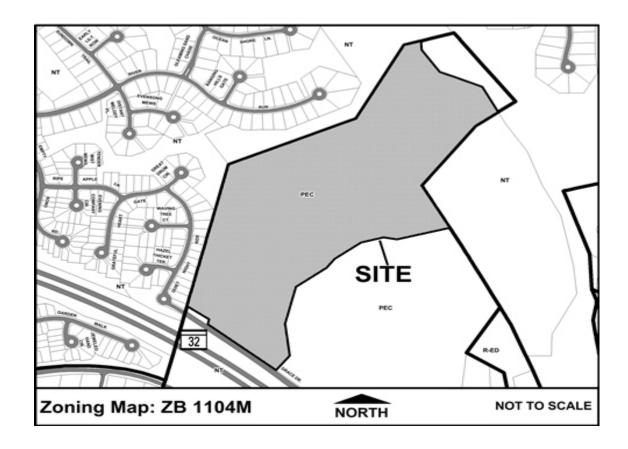
PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

I. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

■ The Petitioner proposes a Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the Site from the current PEC (Planned Employment Center) District designation to the CEF-R (Community Enhancement Floating – Residential) District, for the purpose of developing much of the Site for a residential-only development. The name given to this proposed new development is "Simpson Oaks".

- The CEF-R District is a floating zone, so evaluations of the issues of Change in the Character of the Neighborhood and Mistake are not necessary. Instead, the proposal is evaluated based upon the Criteria for a CEF District in Section 121.0.I of the Zoning Regulations, and the required findings in Section 121.0.J.8.b.
- As is required for CEF District rezoning proposals, the Petitioner has submitted a Development Concept Plan ("DCP"), which for this ZB 1104M proposal consists of a compilation of plans and other documents.

Except as noted, these materials are mostly dated March 28, 2014 and consist of an Existing Conditions Plan, a Boundary Plan, a Site Layout Plan dated March 31, 2014, a Rendered Site Plan, a Rendered Landscape Plan, a Rendered Overall Plan, and a bound booklet dated March 31, 2014 (the "Booklet").



PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

I. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

In order to simplify the understanding of the DCP proposal to the greatest extent possible, the principal plan containing much of the basic information for the development is the large Rendered Overall Plan (the "Overall Plan").

To describe the general areas of the proposed development, the Overall Plan depicts a single, "divided" entrance on Grace Drive, generally located slightly to the west of the center of the road frontage. From this point a road extends straight, then curves slightly to the northwest, and then continues generally through the west side of the Site to a cul-de-sac in the northern area of the Site (the "West Road").

Approximately 600 feet north of the entrance, another road extends east from an intersection, and then curves north and then northeast through the east side of the Site to a terminus (the "East Road"). There are four relatively short cul-de-sac streets extending to the west of the West Road, and there is a connecting road running from near the terminus of the East Road to a point on the West Road approximately 600 feet south of its cul-de-sac (the "Connecting Road"). Please note that these road names are used in this Technical Staff Report, but not in the DCP plans or other materials.

The basic residential development proposal is to construct a total of 184 dwelling units, made up of 103 single-family detached dwellings and 81 single-family attached townhouses. As noted on Page 6 of the Booklet, which describes the proposed bulk regulations, this would mean a gross density of 2.75 dwelling units per gross acre.

There are some areas of steep slopes on the Site, and a small amount of floodplain, so the residential density based on net acres will be higher.

The bulk of the single-family detached lots, 66 lots, are located to the west of the West Road, either fronting on that road or on the four short cul-de-sac extensions, and also fronting on the cul-de-sac at the end of the West Road, and the Petitioner explains that the largest lots will be located closest to the existing residential neighborhood to the west. The remaining 37 single-family detached lots front on the other side of the West Road or on both sides of a portion of the Connecting Road.

Of the townhouse units, 57 would front directly on the sides of the East Road in 11 buildings ranging from three to six units per building. The remaining 24 units would front on two, parallel short road extensions.

■ The proposed development will include 19 Moderate Income Housing Units ("MIHU"). These residences will be "…disbursed throughout the single-family attached community and will be indistinguishable from the other non-MIHU units."

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

I. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

As depicted on the Overall Plan, and on the Architectural Details starting on Page 20 of the Booklet, all of the townhouse units would have garages and driveways of either a single or double width. Also located along the East Road and part of the Connecting Road are approximately 71 additional parking spaces, which could be used for overflow and visitors.

The petition information indicates that all of the single-family detached dwellings will also have garages and driveways with parking available either inside the garages or on the driveways. However, the Architectural Details show the front elevations of some of the single-family detached dwellings as not having front-loading garages, so it appears some may have side-loading garages.

- The total combined parking requirement for all the proposed dwelling units is 460 parking spaces, and the total number of provided parking spaces is 572 parking spaces. For all of the calculation details of the parking within the proposed development please refer to the Site Layout Plan.
- For the required list of uses that will be permitted as a matter of right in the proposed CEF-R District, the Petitioner proposes only single-family detached dwelling units and single-family attached dwelling units.

The required list of proposed accessory uses can be found on the Site Layout Plan. This list is reasonably consistent with the accessory uses allowed in residential districts. It should be noted that while this list includes the "Residential Chicken Keeping" use, because such uses are only allowed on single-family detached lots of 10,000 square feet or larger, this accessory use may not be achievable within the proposed development.

• The proposed residential density, which is also specified on the Site Layout Plan as part of the General Bulk Regulations, is 2.75 dwelling units per gross acre.

The areas of steep slopes on the Site total approximately 2.78 acres, so the net acreage is 64.02. Based on that, the residential density is 2.87 dwelling units per net acre. This is slightly higher than the R-ED District, but less than the R-SC District. There also appears to be a very small amount of floodplain on the Site of unknown area, but it would not increase the net density significantly.

As required by Section 121.0.G, certain site enhancement features are proposed for the development. These are described in detail on Pages 4 through 6 of the Narrative Supplement, and are graphically shown in a generalized manner on Pages 14 through 17 of the Booklet. For the purposes of this Technical Staff Report, a basic list of some of these proposed enhancements is:

A paved "Neighborhood Trail" that will run from Grace Drive through the western side of the development to a point where it will connect to the proposed "Middle Patuxent Environmental Trail".

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

I. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

A stabilized earth and gravel "Middle Patuxent Environmental Trail" that will run from the northeastern area of the Site through the adjoining wooded 31 acre Parcel A, which is also currently owned by W.R. Grace (This parcel is described as the "Overlook Parcel" in the Narrative Supplement). This trail would split into two trails within this parcel, one going "upstream" to the river, and the other "downstream" to the river and eventually as intended, to the Robinson Nature Center.

The Petitioner states that it "...has negotiated with W. R Grace to...dedicate the Overlook Parcel to Howard County."

Working with the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Petitioner will "...examine the feasibility..." of providing activity stations or exercise equipment along the trail(s).

Structured and seated overlooks would be constructed along the trail(s) at vantage points above the river.

The construction of a bicycle path along Grace Drive which would connect to a Columbia Association path at the Quiet Night Ride traffic circle and run along the south side of Grace Drive to a point near the intersection of Grace Drive and Cedar Lane.

- Other site amenities proposed are a Tot Lot (Page 14 of the Booklet), which would be located in a generally triangular open space area between the townhouse area and some of the single-family detached lots, and a Nature Plan/Fitness Station (Page 15 of the Booklet), which would be located in the area to the northeast of the intersection of the Connecting Road and the West Road.
- The proposed Bulk Regulations for the district are listed on the Site Layout Plan. For the single-family detached lots, the bulk regulations are generally consistent with those for the R-SC District, although the minimum lot size of 7,200 square feet is larger than 6,000 square feet of the R-SC District, and the side setback of 5 feet is less than the 7.5 foot setback of the R-SC District.

The proposal to have lot line setbacks for the single-family attached lots is somewhat different than the requirements for the R-SA-8 District, which has setbacks from project boundaries, from other districts, and from rights-of-way, but not from lot lines for single-family attached dwellings.

It is recommended that the Petitioner also specify requirements for porches and decks. The permitted encroachments allowed for such structures in Section 128.0.A are only allowed in "residential zoning districts". Although the CEF-R functions as a residential district, unfortunately when the CEF District regulations were approved, the CEF-R District was not added to the specific definition for "Residential Zoning District" in Section 103.0.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

II. ZONING HISTORY

A. Subject Site

The Site is part of what once was a larger parcel of approximately 147 or 148 acres, depending on what is stated in various case records. In the 1954 Comprehensive Zoning Plan this parcel was zoned R-R, Rural Residential, and became zoned R-40 in the 1961 Comprehensive Zoning Plan. The 1977 Comprehensive Zoning Plan zoned the parcel R (Rural), and this zoning was retained in the 1985 Comprehensive Zoning Plan.

ZB 814 was a 1986 Zoning Map Amendment case requesting to rezone the 147.37 acre parcel from R to PEC. This request was only approved in part on July 25, 1986 because an area roughly equating to the northern area of the Site was kept as R because the Zoning Board concluded that this area could still be used for R District purposes. So at this point in time, the Site was zoned both PEC and R. The 1993 Comprehensive Zoning Plan eliminated the R zoning and made the entire Site zoned PEC.

Over the years, the W. R. Grace facility has had a number of Special Exception Board of Appeals cases. Although these cases largely pertained to the improved area of the facility, because the overall property was one parcel and because the Board of Appeals cases considered the entire parcel as being within the Special Exception boundaries, these cases also applied to what is now the Site.

A. Case No. BA 84-49E&V

Petitioner: W.R. Grace & Company

Request: Modification and expansion of a previously approved Special Exception

to add building and expand parking, and variance to reduce the required

200 foot building setback to 175.36 feet.

Action: Granted, May 5, 1985

B. Case No. BA 83-54E

Petitioner: W.R. Grace & Company

Request: Modification and expansion of a previously approved Special Exception

for a research laboratory, and a variance to the maximum permitted

height in an R (Rural) Zoning District.

Action: Granted, May 21, 1984

C. Case No. BA 83-50E

Petitioner: W.R. Grace & Company

Request: Modification and expansion of a previously approved Special Exception

for a research laboratory.

Action: Granted, February 9, 1984

D. Case No. BA 82-31E

Petitioner: W.R. Grace & Company

Request: Modification and expansion of a previously approved Special Exception

for a research laboratory.

Action: Withdrawn

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

II. ZONING HISTORY

E. Case No. BA 168C

Petitioner: W.R. Grace & Company

Request: Special Exception for a research laboratory.

Action: Granted, August 5, 1955

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Site and Vicinity Description

The Site is located on the north side of Grace Drive approximately 200 feet east of Quiet Night Ridge and to the west of the 7500 Grace Drive property. It is situated between an existing single-family medium density neighborhood of the NT-zoned Village of River Hill Section 6 and associated open space to the west and northwest, and the existing W. R. Grace facility on Parcel A to the east. This facility is comprised of multiple one and two story office and industrial buildings, parking lots, and a prominent water tower.

To the south, across Grace Drive, is the wide right-of-way for MD 32. Down a steep wooded slope to the north is the Middle Patuxent River, and the northern area of the Site is generally a wooded hill which slopes down to the north, northeast, east, and southeast. Adjoining the Site to the northeast is Parcel 412, Parcel A, which is a landlocked, wooded NT-zoned parcel of approximately 31 acres and is owned by W. R. Grace & Company (Parcel A is described as the "Overlook Parcel" on Page 4 of the Narrative Supplement, in the section describing site enhancements).

The southern area of the Site is a mostly wooded slope with some open areas, and from the highest points adjoining the NT neighborhood to the west the Site slopes down approximately 50 to 60 feet to a stream area and the common side lot line with Parcel A. From this point the topography rises up a wooded steep slope area to the improved area of the W. R. Grace facility.

B. Roads

- Grace Drive in this location has two travel lanes and wide paved shoulders with approximately 41 feet of paving. The existing right-of-way is within the very wide and irregular right-of-way for MD 32 to the south.
- The estimated sight distance from the approximate location of the proposed driveway entrance is over 1,000 feet to the southeast and approximately 285 feet to the traffic circle at Quiet Night Ride to the northeast.

Precise sight distance measurements may only be determined through a detailed sight distance analysis, however.

There is no current traffic volume data available for Grace Drive.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

C. Water and Sewer Service

• The Property is in the Metropolitan District and is within the Existing Service Area according to the Geographic Information System Maps.

The Property would be served by public water and sewer facilities.

D. General Plan

- The Site is designated as Established Community on the *PlanHoward 2030* maps. It is designated as Undeveloped Commercial on the Land Use Map.
- Grace Drive is depicted as a Minor Collector on the Transportation Map.

E. Agency Comments

- See attached comments on the proposal from the following agencies:
 - 1. Department of Recreation & Parks
 - 2. Division of Resource Conservation
- The following agency had no objections to the proposal:
 - 1. Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits

F. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance

• The petition is subject to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. A Site Development Plan for the proposed development is subject to the requirement to pass the tests for adequate road facilities and adequate school facilities.

IV. EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- A. Evaluation of petition according to Section 120.0.I of the Zoning Regulations (Criteria for a CEF District):
 - 1. The proposed CEF District is located within the planned service area for both public water and sewer service.

The Site is located within the Planned Service Area.

2. A proposed CEF-C District shall have frontage on and access to an arterial or major collector road. A proposed CEF-R or CEF-M District shall have frontage on and access to an arterial or collector roadway, or a local road if access to the local road is safe based on road conditions and accident history and the local road is not internal to a residential development.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

IV. EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Proposal is for a CEF-R District and the Site is located on Grace Drive, a Minor Collector. The proposed access is to Grace Drive.

3. For all properties, the minimum development size for any CEF District shall be five acres.

The Site is slightly below 67 acres in area (66.8 acres).

4. The proposed CEF District is not located in an existing M-2, TOD, NT, MXD, or PGCC District.

The existing zoning of the Site is PEC.

5. A proposed CEF-R District is not located in an existing non-residential zoning district unless the proposed CEF-R District adjoins a residential zoning district.

The Proposal is located in an existing nonresidential zoning district. On the west side, it adjoins of a single-family medium density residential land use area of the NT District, which based on the definition for a Residential Zoning District is considered to be a residential zoning district.

6. The proposed CEF District is not permitted within the interior of a neighborhood comprising only single-family detached dwellings.

The Site is not within the interior of a single-family detached neighborhood.

7. A CEF development at the proposed location shall be compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods, existing land uses in the vicinity of the site in terms of providing a transitional use between different zoning districts and/or land uses and the scale, height, mass, and architectural detail of proposed structures.

Based on the architectural elevations as depicted in the Booklet, the single-family detached structures which will be behind (i.e., east of) the existing NT-zoned single-family detached dwellings along Quiet Night Ridge will be compatible with these existing dwellings. The proposed single-family detached lots sizes will also be compatible. There will be a relatively wide landscaped buffer between the existing and proposed neighborhoods.

The single-family attached townhouse area of the proposed development is well separated from the existing dwellings along Quiet Night Ridge, and as they will be somewhat lower in elevation at grade, the single-family detached homes in the development will help to screen and buffer these townhouse units. The townhouse units are mostly buffered from the PEC-zoned W. R. Grace facility, and the townhouse buildings along the parallel road extensions will not face that facility. The proposed development does provide a transitional use between different zoning districts.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

IV. EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

8. The proposed CEF development shall include enhancements as provided in Section 121.0.G. The enhancements shall be proportionate to the scale of the CEF development. The standard in that section is that the CEF development must contain one or more design features or enhancements which are beneficial to the community as delineated in accordance with Section 121.0.J.2.A and that exceed minimum standards required by County regulations, excluding bulk regulations. Such features or enhancements must be proportionate to the increase in development intensity and impacts associated with the CEF rezoning compared to the previously existing zoning.

Prior to examining the development based on this criterion, the last sentence should be considered, because the issue of "increase in development intensity and impacts" is based on a comparison of the existing PEC zoning, a nonresidential district, and a purely residential proposed development. Typically, on a basic land use level, changing from a nonresidential district to a residential district is a decrease in intensity, not an increase. However, it can also be viewed that because residential uses are not permitted in the PEC District, changing to a residential district is an increase in <u>residential</u> intensity.

The term "beneficial to the community" in this criterion implies that the development enhancement features should be valuable to the greater community, not just the community within the development itself. The Simpson Oaks development proposal includes provision of the Neighborhood Trail connection from Grace Drive to the Middle Patuxent Environmental Trail, the provision of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Trail that will run through the Overlook Parcel to the river, and to the Robinson Nature Center, and the construction of a bicycle path along Grace Drive.

These items plus the others described above in the Description of Proposal section appear to exceed minimum standards for a somewhat similar district like R-ED, and be satisfactorily proportionate to justify a rezoning from a nonresidential district, which allows structure heights of up to 80 feet, to a residential-only district. The proposed CEF-R District in this location would be a more appropriate transition in use than to develop the Site for PEC uses.

9. The proposed CEF District shall meet the criteria of the purpose statement.

The Community Enhancement Floating (CEF) District is established to encourage the creative development and redevelopment of commercial and residential properties through flexible zoning so that the proposed development complements and enhances the surrounding uses and creates a more coherent, connected development.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

IV. EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The use of the word "coherent" in this criterion appears to mean "rational". The Simpson Oaks development does complement and enhance the existing residential neighborhood to the west, and it would result in a more rational transition in use between this neighborhood and the W. R. Grace facility. The redesign of the development proposal after the initial DPZ review of the first proposal, and after the initial review by the Zoning Board and others, is a sufficiently creative response to the comments made about the development up to this point in time.

While it is envisioned that the CEF District could place residential uses on land zoned for employment in some circumstances, it should not be viewed primarily as a way to convert land zoned for employment to residential.

Although there is no outright prohibition on placing residential uses on land zoned for employment, as the Simpson Oaks CEF is proposing, this part of the Purpose Statement emphasizes that this should only be done "in some circumstances" and not "primarily as a way to convert land zoned for employment to residential." The interpretation of this part of the Purpose Statement is that there should be either a sensible reason to justify a CEF development to convert land zoned for employment to residential uses, or that the CEF development should be of a quality sufficient enough to justify such a conversion.

The Site is somewhat unique because it is a large undeveloped parcel that is situated between a single-family detached neighborhood and a longstanding research laboratory use, and it contains portions of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Hub. Developing the Site for PEC purposes would not allow for much of a transition from the existing residential neighborhood, and developing it for such purposes would be less compatible with the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Hub than the relatively low density residential development as proposed. The Department of Planning and Zoning also finds that the quality of the current Simpson Oaks development does provide justification for the conversion from PEC to CEF-R.

The CEF District is intended to:

A. Allow greater design flexibility and a broader range of development alternatives than the existing zoning district.

Evaluating this criterion for a CEF-R development that is proposed for a currently PEC-zoned property is difficult. A PEC development would have greater design flexibility and a broader range of development alternatives for nonresidential uses than a CEF-R development, and conversely, a CEF-R development would have greater design flexibility and a broader range of development alternatives for residential uses than a PEC development.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

IV. EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

B. Provide features and enhancements which are beneficial to the community in accordance with Section 121.0.G.

As noted above, the current Proposal does provide such features and enhancements.

C. Provide a higher quality of site design and amenities than is possible to achieve under the standard provisions of existing zoning district requirements.

Similarly to the comments above, it is difficult to arrive at a final conclusion on this criterion for the proposed development because this involves a comparison of the wholly nonresidential PEC District to a wholly residential development. It is not reasonable to think that a residential development design is somehow "better" than a PEC development just because it is residential. The site design characteristics of a PEC development are simply different than a residential development. However, the types of amenities being proposed in Simpson Oaks are likely of a higher quality than what a PEC development would offer.

D. Encourage creative architectural design with the most favorable arrangement of site features, based on physical site characteristics and contextual sensitivity to surrounding developments.

The Simpson Oaks proposal provides a reasonably favorable arrangement of site design features, based on the physical site characteristics and the contextual sensitivity to the surrounding developments and properties, except for an issue associated with the culde-sac of the West Road which is noted below in the evaluation of the petition based on the General Plan. The proposed architecture is not especially creative, but it is reasonably pleasing and it would be compatible with the developments in the vicinity.

E. Serve as a transitional area by providing a mix of uses compatible with the surrounding community or developments.

As noted above, the proposed development would function as an appropriate transitional use.

F. Encourage aggregation of underutilized properties.

The Site is a single property so this criterion is not applicable.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

IV. EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

10. The proposed CEF Development does not comprise parcels which were added to the Planned Service Area to achieve Bay Restoration goals articulated in *PlanHoward* 2030.

This criterion is not applicable.

B. Evaluation of petition based on the General Plan

As previously noted, some of the northern areas of the Site appear to be within the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Hub boundaries. These areas may include the cul-de-sac of the West Road and some of the single-family detached lots fronting on this cul-de-sac, and perhaps some lots along the West Road also.

If this is the case, the current development proposal would not be in harmony with *PlanHoward 2030* Policy 3.7 to "Secure better protection of environmental resources within new developments." Policy 4.6 is to "Formalize a Green Infrastructure Network Plan in Howard County", and the current development proposal would not be in harmony with the Implementing Action for Green Infrastructure Network to "Define, protect, and enhance a Green Infrastructure Network that includes and links the most ecologically significant natural areas in Howard County." Finally, the current proposal would be contrary to Policy 4.7 to "Continue to protect, restore, and expand forested lands."

It is recommended that the cul-de-sac of the West Road be shortened to protect green infrastructure consistent with Green Infrastructure boundaries to the northwest and southeast of the Site. This could be compensated by increasing the number of townhouse units accordingly, and the density would remain low. The Department of Recreation and Parks also recommends that this area of the development should be moved further from the river.

C. Fiscal Note

■ ZB 1104M is for the conversion of PEC-zone land to residential uses, and therefore Section 121.0.J.4.b. of the Zoning Regulations requires the inclusion of a fiscal note in the Technical Staff Report.

The fiscal impact of the proposed Simpson Oaks development consisting of 103 single family detached units and 81 townhomes was evaluated using the County's fiscal impact model that had been created for the most recent General Plan, PlanHoward 2030. All County operating and capital costs and revenues associated with this project have been evaluated. It was assumed that the project would be built out evenly over 5 years. The model output results in total average annual revenues to the County of \$1.4 million over 20 years. Average annual costs incurred by the County over 20 years amounts to \$1.26 million.

PETITIONER: GF Columbia, LLC

IV. EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Thus the resulting net fiscal impact is a positive \$140,000 per year on average over 20 years. Note that these results are based on average market values for new single family detached and townhouse units built in the County as assumed in the PlanHoward 2030 fiscal assessment. These values are \$539,382 for single family detached units and \$357,844 for the townhouse units. To the extent that these values will be higher, which they are likely to be, the net fiscal impact to the County will be improved upon.

V. RECOMMENDATION APPROVAL

For the reasons noted above, the Department of Planning and Zoning recommends that the request to rezone the Site from PEC to CEF-R, be APPROVED, with the following revisions:

- 1. The Petitioner should specify any special setback requirements for typical attached structures such as porches and decks.
- 2. The cul-de-sac area of the West Road should be shortened to be consistent with Green Infrastructure boundaries to the northwest and southeast of the Site.

Marsha S. McLaughlin, Director Date

MM/JRL/jrl

NOTE: The file on this case is available for review at the Public Service Counter in the Department of Planning and Zoning.

SUBJECT: PROPOSED SIMPSON OAKS DEPELOPMENT



TO: Marsha McLaughlin Director,

Department of Planning & Zoning

FROM: Mark Raab, Superintendent,

Natural Resources Division

DATE: April 3, 2014

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS 410-313-4700

Last Wednesday, March 26th we attended a meeting with Timothy Madden and others from the Morris & Ritchie Associates, Inc. to discuss the proposed Simpson Oaks development in general and more specifically the large piece of Open Space that they are proposing to deed over to the County.

At this meeting we discussed the conceptual plan for a proposed trail, bridge across the Middle Patuxent River and access points as well as some alternatives to their proposal.

We were very impressed with the concept plan and also with their willingness to consider our suggestions regarding the parts of the plan that we felt were good as well as the parts of the plan that we opposed.

The acquisition of this parcel of land would be an excellent opportunity to not only provide substantial permanent riparian buffer on the west side of the Middle Patuxent but provide some excellent opportunities for considerable expansion of interpretive trails for the Robinson Nature Center.

I realize that the development must meet all DPZ regulations and that this is a preliminary drawing but we are concerned about the closeness of the homes at the end of the cul-de-sac to the river especially with the steepness of the slopes in that area. We would prefer to see if we could get the developer to pull this area back a bit to provide a wider buffer on the river.

I am convinced of their willingness to work with us in the design and layout of the plan and that the County would get an end product that not only suits the needs of the Developer but the County and the Robinson Nature Center.

The Department of Recreation and Parks is in support of this project and is looking forward to working together with Morris & Ritchie Associates to make this acquisition a very unique partnership.



Subject:

ZB 1104M - GF Columbia, LLC

Simpson Oaks Development

To:

Cindy Hamilton, Chief

Division of Public Service and Zoning Administration

From:

Beth Burgess, Chief

Resource Conservation Division

Date:

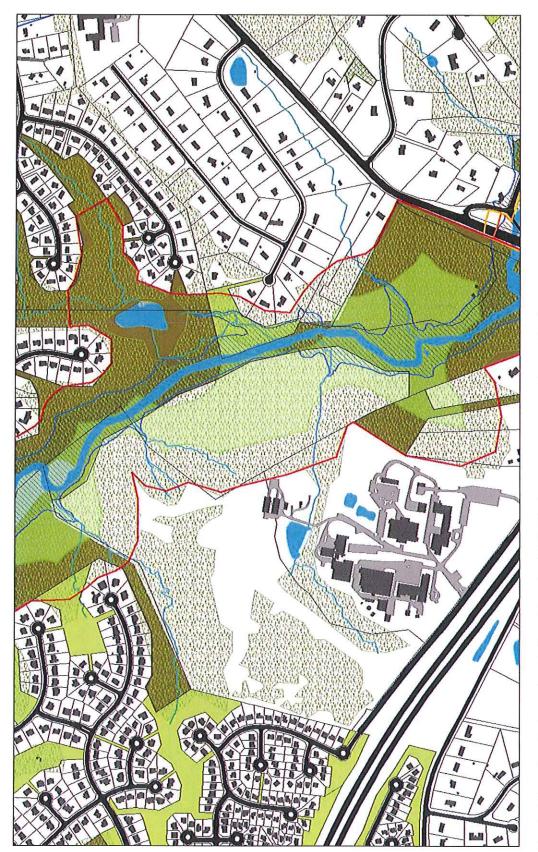
April 15, 2014

A portion of this property is within the Howard County Green Infrastructure Network, which is a County-wide system of interconnected hubs and corridors, as defined in the Howard County Green Infrastructure Network Plan (GI Plan), published December 2012 by the Department of Planning and Zoning. The purpose of the GI Plan is to define, protect and enhance a system of hubs and corridors that includes and links the most ecologically significant natural areas in Howard County. Hubs are large, ecologically significant, natural areas that provide habitat for wildlife. Large contiguous blocks of interior forest (forest found at least 300 feet from the forest edge) and large wetland complexes are an essential component of hubs. Corridors are linear features that tie hubs together and they may include: rivers and streams, narrow sections of forest, and other upland areas that serve as biological conduits for plants and wildlife.

PlanHoward 2030 states that the GI Plan will enable planners to consider important natural resources when implementing PlanHoward 2030, as well as the Land Preservation, Recreation and Parks Plan, transportation plans, watershed plans, and community plans. The GI Plan will also aid in decision making about zoning and development proposals, acquiring land for parks and public facilities, and obtaining agricultural, environmental, and other land preservation easements. The GI Plan will offer a comprehensive approach to land and water conservation that takes into account the County's development plans.

This property contains portions of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Hub. This hub contains the second largest area of contiguous forest in the County and two large areas of forest interior habitat. Forest interior habitat is a higher quality forest habitat, because it is generally more isolated, with a closed canopy that creates moist, shaded growing conditions, with fewer invasive species. Forest interior habitat is a more rare forest environment, because development has fragmented the County's remaining forest into smaller forest patches.

The hub's northern area of forest interior habitat is approximately 200 acres and is the sixth largest area in the County, and the southern area is approximately 169 acres and is the tenth largest in the County. This property's eastern parcel is almost entirely located within the hub, as is the wooded northern portion of the western parcel. These portions of the property contain portions of the southern area of forest interior habitat, along with the 300' forest interior habitat buffer.



The hub boundary is shown in red. Forest interior habitat is shown as a green overlay on the forest.



Meeting Summary March 26, 2014

Attendance

Panel Members:

Phyllis Cook, Chair

Hank Alinger
Phillips Engelke
Rob Hollis
Don Taylor
Peggy White

DPZ Staff:

Brad Killian, Dace Blaumanis

NAPA Facility #14-04

Owner:

Quaker City Auto Parts Co., Inc.

Architects:

Appleby and Lacetti Architects, Inc.

Engineer:

Rettew Associates, Inc.

Oxford Square, Parcels C & E #14-05

Owner:

Kellogg-CCP, LLC

Developer:

Kellogg-CCP, LLC

Architects:

Hord Coplan Macht, Inc.

Engineer:

Fisher Collins and Carter, Inc.

Simpson Oaks #14-06

Owner

WR Grace & Co.

Developer:

GF Columbia, LLC

Architects: Engineer:

Dale Wilkowske, Pinnacle Design Morris & Richie Associates, Inc.

- **1. Call to Order** DAP Chair Phyllis Cook opened the meeting at 7:30 pm, calling for introductions of the Panel, staff and project team.
- 2. Review of NAPA Facility #14-04 David Miller, Project Manager, Rettew Associates, Inc. introduced the project giving the location of the existing 60,000 square feet distribution center in North Laurel, on Route One. He stated that the proposed expansion will be 30,000 square feet. The front of the site, on the west side facing Route One, is wooded; a large portion of this screening will remain. A new driveway will facilitate truck traffic to the loading docks and will be separate from the staff and customer parking. New stormwater management facilities affect the proposed site plan. He stated that the site design does not include sidewalks because of the location of existing utilities.

Participating by phone, Tom Lacetti, Appleby and Lacetti Architects, Inc., stated that exterior building materials will match those of the existing NAPA building – gray paneling with the blue NAPA stripe, noting that the addition will be taller than the existing building.

DAP adopted the following recommendations for the project. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning.

DAP member Don Taylor offered the following motion:

1. "That the Applicant considers reducing the amount of paving by closing off the south link to the customer parking lot." Seconded by H. Alinger. Vote 5-1.

DAP member Hank Alinger offered the following motion:

2. "That the Applicant looks at any other alternatives to try to reduce the BMP [Best Management Practices for stormwater] that is on the west side of the entry drive." Seconded by P. Cook. Vote 6-0.

DAP Chair Phyllis Cook offered the following motion:

3. "That the Applicant studies different ways of allowing a sidewalk along Route One to happen, and [also] accessing to the site itself." Seconded by R. Hollis. Vote 6-0.

DAP member Phillips Engelke offered the following motion:

- 4. "That the Applicant reconfigures [the] logo sign so it corresponds to the way the signage is being looked at along Route One at this time." Seconded by H. Alinger. Vote 6-0.
- 3. Review of Oxford Square, Parcels C & E #14-05 Matthew Fitzsimmons, Hord Coplan Macht, Inc., presented an overview of the design of Oxford Square, stating it is located at Dorsey MARC Station, off MD Route 100 and Coca Cola Drive. Parcel C's design is now changed from the previous submission of apartments to townhouses and two-over-two residential units. Parcel E is proposed as a block of two-over-two residential units.

Hugh Winstead, Middleburg Associates, noted that there are two types of townhouses. The first type is 22-foot by 44-foot units with a two-car rear entry garage which Lennar has been building for 30 years. There are 50 of these in 17 buildings. The other type is 20-foot by 40-foot units; there will 18 buildings with 51 units. All have covered front entrances. The design now has gables added to the roof and also has more brick than in the previous design presented to the DAP. Judi Miller, Architecture by Design, stated that the biggest concern is the massing of the two-over-two units, noting that the goal is try to blend in with the townhomes. Michael Bundy, Lennar Corporation, stated that the builder, not the customer, determines the exterior features of the unit.

By unanimous consent pursuant to each motion duly made and seconded, DAP adopted the following recommendations for the project. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning.

DAP member Rob Hollis offered the following motion:

1. "That the Applicant considers more rooftop access potential for the housing units, as well as the potential to introduce some flat roofs, not all pitched roofs." Seconded by P. Engelke.

DAP member Hank Alinger offered the following motions:

- "That the Applicant reconsiders the design of Dunstead Street to be more of a pedestrian way and consider using alternate materials like pavers to reinforce that feeling." Seconded by P. Cook.
- 3. "That the Applicant considers reshaping the roadway at the southwest corner of Parcel C to make it flow a little bit better and potentially incorporate a small pocket park in that corner of the parcel." Seconded by P. Cook.

DAP Chair Phyllis Cook offered the following motion:

4. "That the Applicant considers a minimal use of decorative dormers." Seconded by H. Alinger.

DAP member Rob Hollis offered the following motion:

5. "That the Applicant, on the longer elevations of townhomes, considers more play of positive and negative space to break up the length, to give some articulation." Seconded by P. Engelke.

DAP member Phillips Engelke offered the following motion:

- "That the Applicant looks at the alley elevations and replaces some of the balconies with some kind of a bump out." Seconded by R. Hollis.
- 4. Review of Simpson Oaks #14-06 Tim Madden, Morris & Richie Associates, Inc., introduced the Simpson Oaks project which is proposed for rezoning to the CEF (Community Enhancement Floating) District. The property is 66 acres fronting on Grace Drive, next to the village of River Hill, beside the Middle Patuxent River, just north of MD Route 32 at Cedar Lane. It is currently zoned PEC (Planned Employment Center) and is part of W. R. Grace & Company holdings, originally planned as an office park. The proposal is for 184 residential units, both single-family detached and townhomes. The goal is to make the design compatible with the adjacent neighborhoods. The plans include a community trail for the area and a bikeway along Grace Drive. The current plans are conceptual; no builder has been selected vet.

By unanimous consent pursuant to each motion duly made and seconded, DAP adopted the following recommendations for the project. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Planning Board.

DAP member Don Taylor offered the following motion:

1. "That the Applicant gives serious consideration to the potential architecture and how it would influence the lotting of this subdivision." Seconded by R. Hollis.

DAP member Hank Alinger offered the following motion:

2. "That the Applicant rethinks the overall layout, particularly in regard to the townhomes and how they work and integrate better with the single-family [units] and how they work, independent in some ways, as a self-contained community that has some identity of its own." Seconded by D. Taylor.

DAP Chair Phyllis Cook offered the following motion:

- 3. "That the Applicant revisits their presentation to the DAP Panel when you have more information about the site development plan, the housing types and architecture." Seconded by H. Alinger.
- 5. Call to Adjourn The Panel adjourned at 9:42 pm.